

Message Text

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ACTION A-01

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3286

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BOGOTA 7746

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP (HOLLINGS, ERNEST), CO SNAR, PBOR, PN, SHUM

SUBJECT: CODEL HOLLINGS

REFERENCE: BOGOTA 7642

1. SENATORS HOLLINGS AND SCOTT HELD SEPARATE, PRODUCTIVE AND FRANK DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESIDENT LOPEZ AND FOREIGN MINISTER LIEVANO ON AUG. 16. WHILE THE FOCUS WAS ON THE CANAL TREATY, THE HOUR LONG SESSIONS ALSO TOUCHED ON NARCOTICS TRAFFIC, TRADE AND HUMAN RIGHTS. DRAFT MEMCONS ARE BEING SENT TO CODEL FOR APPROVAL. FOLLOWING SUMMARIZES THEIR CONVERSATIONS.

THE CANAL TREATY.

2. THE KEY QUESTION SENATOR HOLLINGS PUT TO BOTH THE PRESIDENT AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER WAS "WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THE SENATE DOES NOT RATIFY THE PANAMA CANAL TREATY?" NEITHER THE PRESIDENT NOR THE FOREIGN MINISTER THOUGHT THAT THERE WAS A RISK OF ANOTHER "VIET NAM " DEVELOPING IN PANAMA. THE PROBLEM WAS A LONGER TERM OF ONE BASIC RELATIONSHIP IN PANAMA AND LATIN AMERICA. SHOULD THE CANAL TREATY BE RATIFIED THE CANAL WILL BE SURROUNDED BY A FRIENDLY COUNTRY, IF NOT, IT WILL NOT. FAILURE TO RATIFY THE TREATY WMULD ALSO PLACE AN ENDURING THORN IN U.S. REALTIONSHP THROUGHOUT LATIN AMERICA THAT WOULD AFFECT ISSUES AND
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PROBLEMS TOTALLY UNRELATED TO THE CANAL OR PANAMA. MORE-OVER,THE ANTI-AMERICANS THROUGHT THE HEMISPHERE WOULD USE FAILURE TO RATIFY THE TREATY AS PRETEXT TO CAUSE THE U.S. SOME GRIEF. TORRIJOS WAS NOT SEEKING TO BREAK OR EVEN STRAIN RELATIONS WITH THE U.S., ON THE CONTRARY, LIEVANO EMPHASIZED, TORRIJOS WANTED TO CONTINUE A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S. AND WAS SEEKING TO IMPROVE THE

SITUATION. TORRIJOS, BOTH COLOMBIAN LEADERS STRESSED, REPRESENTED THE NATIONALISTIC ASPIRATIONS OF THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE, HE DID NOT REPRESENT THE TRADITIONAL RULING ELITE. HENCE, A TREATY SIGNED BY HIM WOULD ESTABLISH AN ENDURING SITUATION. A TREATY SIGNED WITH THE TRADITIONAL FAMILY ELITE ON THE OTHER HAND WOULD NOT HAVE ENDURED. LIEVANO SAID THAT THE U.S. CANAL NEGOTIATORS WERE AMONG THE BEST THE U.S. POSSESSED, AND HE IMAGINED THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO FIND A SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE TO THE TREATY AS IT NOW STOOD.

3. IN RESPONSE TO SENATOR SCOTT'S PROBING AS TO THE RISK OF A COMMUNIST TAKEOVER IN PANAMA, LIEVANO OPINED THAT, WHATEVER THE FUTURE MIGHT HOLD FOR THE POLITICS IN PANAMA, THE PROBABILITY OF A HOSTILE POLITICAL DRIFT WAS GREATER WITHOUT THE TREATY THAN WITH IT. SENATOR SCOTT ASKED THE PRESIDENT IF PERHAPS THE PAN AMERICAN UNION OR SOME INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION MIGHT BETTER GUARANTEES AND RUN THE CANAL. PRESIDENT LOPEZ SAID THAT, IN THE MULTILATERAL BODIES, THE U.S. WAS, AND WOULD REMAIN A MINORITY. IN THE OAS, WITH THE ENGLISH SPEAKING MINI STATES EVENTUALLY ACQUIRING A VOTING MAJORITY, THE RISK OF LOSING CONTROL OF THE CANAL TO LEFTWARD DRIFTING REGIMES WAS MUCH GREATER THAN IF PANAMA AND THE UNITED STATES JOINTLY GUARANTEED THE NEUTRALITY OF THE CANAL.

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4. PRESIDENT LOPEZ EMPHASIZED SEVERAL TIMES THAT, IN HIS OPINION, THE KEY WAS NOT THE NEUTRALITY OF THE CANAL BUT THE OPTION TO BUILD AN ALTERNATIVE CANAL TO HANDLE THE LARGER TANKERS. THE U.S. HAS THE OPTION, THUS A THIRD COUNTRY, PERHAPS AN ENEMY COUNTRY, WILL NOT BUILD A SECOND CANAL.

5. LOPEZ ALSO REITERATED HIS CONCERN THAT THE LINKAGE BETWEEN TOLLS AND U.S. PAYMENTS TO PANAMA WOULD CREATE A SITUATION IN WHICH EACH TIME THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT SUFFERED FISCAL DIFFICULTIES THERE WOULD BE PRESSURE TO RAISE TOLLS. HE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED A STRAIGHT AND UNLINKED TRANSFER OF FUNDS. SENATOR HOLLINGS EXPLAINED THAT APPROPRIATIONS SMACKED OF REPARATIONS AND THAT ANY PAYMENT MUST COME FROM CANAL EARNINGS OR RATIFICATION WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE.

6. SENATOR HOLLINGS SHOWED AN OPENESS TO THE CANAL QUESTION THROUGHOUT THE MEETINGS AND STRESSED THAT HE AND MOST AMERICANS RECOGNIZED THE NEED FOR SOME ADJUSTMENT, PARTICULARLY REGARDING THE ZONE, HOWEVER HE EXPRESSED

HIS CONCERN ABOUT THE USE OF THE CANAL AND ITS NEUTRALITY AFTER THE YEAR 2000. SENATOR SCOTT ON THE OTHER HAND MADE HIS OPPOSITION TO THE CANAL TREATY CLEAR, SAYING THAT IT WAS U.S. TERRITORY, WHICH HAD BEEN BOUGHT AND PAID FOR AND WHICH THE SUPREME COURT IN 1948 HAD FOUND TO BE U.S. TERRITORY. HE DOUBTED THAT A TREATY GIVING AWAY SOVEREIGN U.S. TERRITORY COULD BE RATIFIED BY THE U.S. SENATE.

NARCOTICS.

7. SENATOR HOLLINGS RAISED THE NARCOTICS PROBLEM WITH BOTH GENTLEMEN POINTING OUT HOW THE DRUG PROBLEM IN TURKEY HAD BECOME A SWING FACTOR IN THE CONGRESS AFFECT-
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ING VOTES RELATED TO TURKEY BUT TOTALLY UNRELATED TO THE DRUG PROBLEM. WHILE THIS IS NOT A PROBLEM WITH THE CONGRESS AT PRESENT, AS THE WORD SPREADS THAT COLOMBIA IS THE BIGGEST SUPPLIER OF THIS STUFF, THEN A PROBLEM COULD DEVELOP THAT WOULD NOT BE IN EITHER COUNTRY'S INTEREST.

8. THE PRESIDENT AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER RESPONDED TO THE POINT TOTALLY DIFFERENTLY. THE PRESIDENT, WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THE PROBLEM, TRIED TO DOWN PLAY ITS SIZE, POINTING OUT THAT THE FUTURES COMPARING DRUG INCOME TO COFFEE WERE GREATLY EXAGGERATED, AND THE COLOMBIA WAS A TRANSPORT ROUTE, NOT A MAJOR PRODUCER WHICH HAD BEEN THE CASE IN TURKEY.

9. LIEVANO, ON THE OTHER HAND, SAID HE WAS READY TO LAUNCH TOTAL WAR ON DRUGS, BECAUSE HE PERCEIVED IT IS A VERY SERIOUS THREAT. THREE YEARS PREVIOUSLY HE THOUGHT ALL HAD AGREED TO DECLARE TOTAL WAR IN "OPERATION WHITE", BUT THAT THE EQUIPMENT WHICH WAS INTEGRAL TO TH SUCCESS OF THE OPERATION HAD NOT BEEN FORTHCOMING. SENATOR HOLLINGS ASKED LIEVANO WHETHER THERE WOULD BE A TOTAL WAS DECLARED ON THE DRUG TRAFFIC IF COLOMBIA RECEIVED THE EQUIPMENT. LIEVANO SAID YES. THE SENATOR ALSO ASKED IF THE \$30 MILLION WAS A ONE SHOT AMOUNT OF JUST THE BEGINNING, TO WHICH LIEVANO RESPONDED "THE BEGINNING".

TRADE.

10. DR. LIEVANO SAID THAT HE WAS FULLY SYMPATHETIC WITH THE U.S. DESIRE AND NEED TO PROTECT THE U.S. MARKET FROM TEXTILES, OR SIMILAR PRODUCTS, FROM THE HUGE AND DISTORTING INFLUX OF CHEAP TEXTILES FROM TAIWAN,

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3287

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BOGOTA 7746

HONG KONG, AND JAPAN, BUT COLOMBIA, OR THE OTHER COUNTRIES IN LATIN AMERICA, WHO DID NOT PRODUCE SUFFICIENT OF THESE PRODUCTS TO MAKE EVEN A RIPPLE IN THE U.S. MARKET, WERE CAUGHT BY THE PROTECTION. IF THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE U.S. AND LATIN AMERICA IS TO HAVE MEANING, THEN THE U.S. SHOULD CONSIDER GRANTING COLOMBIA AND THE OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES SPECIAL CONSIDERATION. SENATOR HILLINGS, SAID THAT, SINCE HE REPRESENTED A STATE WHERE MOST JOBS WERE DEPENDENT ON TEXTILES, HE WAS VERY AWARE OF THE ISSUE. HE PROMISED TO TALK TO ROBERT STRAUSE ABOUT THE MATTER.

11. SENATOR SCOTT SAID HE AGREED THERE WAS A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP AND THAT BOTH SENATORS WERE AGREED ON THE NEED TO IMPROVE RELATIONSHIP AND PAY CLOSER ATTENTION TO LATIN AMERICA. HE BELIEVED THAT THE MONROE DOCTRINE SHOULD CONTINUE TO GOVERN OUR POLICY TOWARD LATIN AMERICA.

HUMAN RIGHTS.

12. SENATOR HOLLINGS LED OFF THE DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESIDENT LOPEZ BY ACKNOWLEDGING COLOMBIA'S AND PRESIDENT LOPEZ' RECORD IN HUMAN RIGHTS, ADMITTING THAT AT TIMES THE U.S. ACTED AS IF IT HAD INVENTED HUMAN RIGHTS. PRESIDENT LOPEZ VIEWED THE HUMAN RIGHTS ATMOSPHERE IN

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THE HEMISPHERE AS INTIMATELY LINKED TO THE ECONOMIC SITUATION. INFLATION WAS CREATING GREAT PRESSURE FOR

CHANGE. DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS WERE UNDER PRESSURE BECAUSE ALL OF THEIR ANTI-INFLATION TOOLS WERE PROVING INADEQUATE, AND THERE WAS A FEELING THAT STRONGER AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENTS COULD BETTER HANDLE THE SITUATION. THE AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENTS, ON THE OTHER HAND WERE UNDER PRESSURE BECAUSE, IN THOSE COUNTRIES, THERE WAS A GROWING BELIEF THAT MORE REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTIONS COULD BETTER DEAL WITH THE INFLATION. THE U.S. EMPHASIS ON HUMAN RIGHTS THEREFORE WAS FINDING FERTILE GROUND IN COUNTRIES WITH MILITARY REGIMES, BECAUSE THE ECONOMIC SITUATION WAS CAUSING A DRIFT BACK TOWARD MORE REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTIONS.

13. COMMENT:

THE MEETINGS WERE FRIENDLY AND FRANK, LIEVANO WAS PARTICULARLY JOVIAL AND OUTGOING. WE BELIEVE THAT THE MEETINGS WERE USEFUL, PARTICULARLY FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION WHO WERE UNDECIDED BUT SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE TREATY. BOTH LOPEZ AND LIEVANO WERE AUTHORITATIVE AND PERSUASIVE. IT WAS ALSO USEFUL FOR THE COLOMBIAN LEADERS TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO GAIN A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF SOME OF THE DIFFICULTIES THE TREATY NOW FACES IN RATIFICATION.

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